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COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report responds to Economic and Social Council decision 1996/310, in which the Council decided to devote the coordination segment of its substantive session of 1997 to consideration of the cross-sectoral theme "Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system". The report addresses issues of mainstreaming by intergovernmental bodies and the United Nations system and proposes recommendations for consideration by the Council.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in response to Economic and Social Council decision 1996/310, in which the Council decided that the coordination segment of its substantive session of 1997 should be devoted to consideration of the cross-sectoral theme "Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system". The General Assembly, in its resolution 51/69, welcomed the decision of the Council, and requested the Secretary-General to present action-oriented recommendations to the Council on means to enhance system-wide coordination on gender issues and to mainstream a gender perspective throughout the United Nations system.

2. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-first session, adopted a resolution on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.[1] The Commission, inter alia, encouraged the Council, at its coordination segment in 1997, to develop specific recommendations for mainstreaming a gender perspective into all United Nations system activities and urged the Council to specifically integrate a gender perspective into its deliberations on economic and social issues, including the high-level segment.

3. The present report provides an overview and makes recommendations relating to mainstreaming a gender perspective in a coordinated manner at the intergovernmental level. It points to the need to bring a gender perspective not only into socio-economic areas and activities falling within the responsibility of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, but also into areas where gender issues have not or have only infrequently been considered. The report also briefly describes efforts at mainstreaming by the Secretariat and the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system. Steps to ensure that the impact of gender as a key variable is integral to research, planning, policy-making and institutional development are proposed, building on initial proposals before the General Assembly at its fifty-first session[2] and taking into account the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "The advancement of women through and in the programmes of the United Nations system: what happens after the Fourth World Conference on Women?" (see A/50/509)[3] and the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Technical assistance and women: from mainstreaming towards institutional accountability" (E/CN.6/1995/6), which was considered by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session, in 1995.

4. Many departments, funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system contributed to the preparation of the present report. Extensive discussions were held in the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, drawing upon papers prepared by the Gender in Development (GID) Subgroup of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP).

I. MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE AT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL LEVEL

5. Discussion of women's concerns in United Nations intergovernmental bodies has traditionally been largely confined to the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council under the item "Advancement of women", and the Third and periodically the Second Committees of the General Assembly. Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, other intergovernmental bodies have also sought to implement relevant aspects of the Platform for Action and to mainstream gender in their areas of responsibility.[4] The present report refers to some of these efforts and to approaches to improving coordination.

A. The General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies

6. In addition to the discussions on women and gender issues held by the Third Committee of the General Assembly, the Second Committee of the Assembly considers gender biennially when discussing economic issues (see Assembly resolution 50/104). The report of the Secretary-General prepared in response to the Assembly's request in its resolution 50/104 will apply a gender methodology to mainstreaming a gender perspective. The Second Committee has taken a gender-sensitive approach in its examination of several other topics, for example its mid-decade review of progress in implementing the goals of the World Summit for Children (see Assembly resolution 51/186).

7. The importance of addressing gender issues in formulating economic and overall development policies grew out of extensive work which was being undertaken with regard to women in development, and the recognition of the limitations of a gender neutral approach for achieving socio-economic progress. Notably, much of the practical experience with regard to gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system has been gleaned from operational activities, yet the insights gained are not generally incorporated into the Second Committee's review of operational activities for development. The most recent resolution on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (General Assembly resolution 50/120) confined its reference to gender to the appointment of women to senior level posts (para. 43).

8. The Assembly has sometimes recognized gender as a factor to be taken into account in humanitarian affairs. At its fifty-first session, the Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, denounced cases of violations of the human rights of women, encouraged the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to strengthen its efforts for the protection of women having a well-founded fear of persecution and called upon States to ensure that women in such situations were recognized as refugees and to adopt a gender-sensitive approach (General Assembly resolution 51/75). However, systematic consideration of gender factors in the framework of humanitarian assistance has yet to occur.

9. In its examination of the United Nations medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, the Committee for Programme and Coordination agreed to ensure that the mainstreaming of a gender perspective was reflected in the individual

programmes of the medium-term plan, and emphasized the responsibility of programme managers for progress in gender mainstreaming (A/51/16 (Part I), para. 167). The Committee also stressed the necessity of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the planning and programming of all United Nations agencies (A/51/16 (Part I), para. 169).

10. In the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/51/322), it was noted that the Draft Code of Crimes against the Peace and Security of Mankind, prepared by the International Law Commission, addressed situations of particular concern to women in its definition of crimes, but attention to gender in the International Law Commission and other main committees and subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly remains limited and, at best, is confined to women-specific concerns. Gender as a factor has not been considered, for example, in the political and security field or in the work of the First Committee of the Assembly or its Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

Recommendations

11. Recommendations relating to the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies are as follows:

- The Council may wish to encourage the General Assembly to direct all its main committees and subsidiary bodies to take gender factors into consideration in their work. In particular, a gender perspective should be applied in the Second Committee's triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and in the Committee's consideration of macroeconomic questions. The Assembly may also be encouraged to assess gender factors systematically in its consideration of humanitarian assistance, both generally and in particular situations.

- The Committee for Programme and Coordination should ensure, during its forthcoming review of the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, that all programmes visibly mainstream a gender perspective, including through the identification of activities that are designed to incorporate a gender analysis.

- The Secretariat should be encouraged, when preparing reports relating to economic, humanitarian, peacekeeping and other areas, to enhance its efforts to define issues and approaches in a gender-sensitive manner, drawing on the expertise that exists within and outside the United Nations system, so as to provide the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies with an analytical basis for gender-responsive policy formulation.

- The Council should encourage the Commission on the Status of Women to play a catalytic role and draw the attention of bodies dealing with legal matters and political and security issues, such as those in the area of peacekeeping, to the impact of gender factors on peace, conflict-resolution and related areas. The consideration by the Commission in 1998 of the critical areas of concern "Women in armed conflict", "Violence against women", "Human rights of women" and "The girl child" could provide specific guidance in that regard.

B. The Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions

12. Reports of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in 1996 and to the Commission on the Status of Women in 1997 indicated that a number of the Council's functional commissions had taken steps to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women. The results of the most recent sessions of the functional commissions with regard to gender are summarized in the report of the Secretary-General on ways and means to enhance the capacity of the Organization and the United Nations system to support the ongoing follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/1997/64).

13. The role of the Commission on the Status of Women in the three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism with regard to women's and gender issues and mainstreaming a gender perspective in following up the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as its central role in monitoring the implementation of the Platform for Action and in advising the Economic and Social Council thereon, were spelled out in General Assembly resolution 50/203. The Council, in resolution 1996/6, established the framework for the functioning of the Commission, including its terms of reference, work programme and working methods, and decided that the Commission should have a catalytic role in mainstreaming a gender perspective in policies and programmes.

14. In resolution 50/203, the General Assembly specifically invited all the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council to take due account of gender aspects in their respective work. In its agreed conclusions 1996/1 on poverty eradication (A/51/3 (Part I), chap. III, para. 2), the Council provided further incentive for mainstreaming gender in the consideration of core issues within the mandates of the commissions when it invited its functional commissions as a follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women to consider reviewing the gender implications of policies falling within their competence.

15. A harmonized approach to the follow-up to the Beijing Conference and related agreements reached at other conferences would allow the commissions to reinforce and complement each other's work. They could approach issues of common interest from different perspectives and avoid duplicating recommendations. Examination of an issue and its policy implications from a gender perspective within one area should help to inform the work of other commissions. For example, the Commission on Sustainable Development had available the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on women and the environment to draw on in its preparations for the five-year review of Agenda 21. Similarly, the Commission on the Status of Women and the

Commission for Social Development could harmonize efforts on older women in connection with the International Year of Older Persons.

16. The extent to which gender has been taken up in the work of the commissions may be inferred from references to gender in the outcome of their work (resolutions, agreed conclusions), as well as from the reports considered by them and the ensuing discussion. There has been an increase in "women-specific" resolutions calling for steps to address the specific situation of women in certain areas. Most commissions have also recognized that where the situation of women differs from that of men, women could experience the effects of policies and programmes differently and that, consequently, gender needs to be factored into the analysis of issues and situations and into the design of policies. This has led to the adoption of "mainstreaming resolutions". Several commissions have called for mainstreaming a gender perspective in cross-cutting areas of recent international conferences, but only a few have made technical and focused proposals regarding the type of policy changes needed in their respective core areas to ensure positive outcomes for women.

17. To facilitate mainstreaming, the Secretary-General, in preparing reports for the functional commissions and the regional commissions, will consistently apply a gender perspective in the analysis of issues and in the preparation of policy options, in accordance with the steps described in the report on the implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/51/322), and with the measures proposed in the Council's agreed conclusions 1996/1 on poverty eradication.

18. Specific issues of concern to women are sometimes addressed by more than one commission, as well as by the Third Committee of the General Assembly. Examples include the issue of violence against women (Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Commission on Human Rights); the situation of the girl child (Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Human Rights, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice); traffic in women and girls (Commission on Human Rights, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice); and violence against women migrant workers (Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Human Rights). There has been some dialogue between the commissions dealing with these issues, but there is sometimes duplication of measures recommended.

19. A number of commissions have called for mainstreaming a gender perspective in poverty eradication strategies (Commission for Social Development, Commission on Sustainable Development); in policies and programmes related to employment (Commission for Social Development); and in sustainable development policies (Commission on Sustainable Development). The Commission on Human Rights has called for mainstreaming a gender perspective in the work of the United Nations in the area of human rights. The Commission on Human Settlements has called for measures to develop gender-sensitive shelter strategies.

20. At its twenty-eighth session, in 1995, the Commission on Population and Development decided that gender issues should be emphasized in its review of international migration in 1997 and health and mortality in 1998. At its thirtieth session, in 1997, the Commission had before it the report of the

Secretary-General on world population monitoring, which contained a thorough analysis of gender aspects of international migration and development. The Commission was also informed of the findings of a Population Division study on sex differentials in childhood mortality, and the biological, social and economic mechanisms that lead to excess female mortality in childhood. The Commission's recommendation to the Economic and Social Council on international migration and development[5] and its resolution on international migration[6] both referred to the Beijing Platform for Action.[7]

21. Some Commissions were focusing on gender even prior to the Fourth World Conference on Women. In 1995, for example, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development created an advisory board on gender issues to facilitate its future deliberations and follow-up activities.

22. In addition, the Statistical Commission has consistently encouraged the development of statistics and indicators on women, giving special attention to the informal sector and women's contribution to development. The Commission has also encouraged work on economic accounts on women's contribution to production to supplement the System of National Accounts,[8] and recommended the preparation of a draft classification for time-use activities.

23. The Commission on Human Rights has dealt with a number of aspects concerning the human rights of women covered by the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (see E/CN.4/1997/40).

24. Broadly, commissions have stressed that gender-sensitive analysis should be an integral part of the development and monitoring of policies and programmes. They have called for enhancing the participation of women in the design of policies and programmes within their mandate, and for empowering women, in particular through access to productive resources, including education and training. The Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women has informed the chairpersons of other functional commissions, including the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Commission on Human Rights, of actions taken by the Commission on the Status of Women with a view to facilitating mainstreaming and coordination.

25. It remains for these bodies to move beyond the adoption of resolutions calling for gender mainstreaming and "women-specific" resolutions to the systematic reflection of gender in the analysis of all areas.

26. In resolution 1996/36, the Economic and Social Council decided that it would continue to ensure the harmonization and coordination of the multi-year work programmes of relevant functional commissions by promoting a clear division of labour among them and providing clear policy guidance to them (for a tabular breakdown of the multi-year work programmes see document E/1997/73 concerning integrated follow-up to conferences).

27. A coordinated work programme of the functional commissions should be differentiated from mainstreaming a gender perspective in the work of all functional commissions. Coordinated work programmes are intended to avoid duplication and overlap and to ensure that commissions utilize their comparative

advantage with regard to the substance of an issue. Mainstreaming constitutes a conceptual approach to an issue and requires that a gender perspective be applied by each commission to all issues in its coordinated work programme. The Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1996/1 on poverty eradication provide suggestions on mainstreaming gender in relation to that cross-cutting theme. A report on the implementation of the agreed conclusions, including the steps taken by the Commission on the Status of Women, is before the Council (E/1997/58).

Recommendations

28. Recommendations relating to the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions are as follows:

- All the functional commissions should adopt an explicit decision on mainstreaming a gender perspective in their work and, where appropriate, indicate the resources their secretariats might require and the modalities to carry out such work. Based on the annual report of the Secretary-General on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and on mainstreaming a gender perspective, the Council should monitor annually how its functional commissions and the regional commissions apply gender analysis to issues under consideration, including the integrated follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and other global United Nations conferences.

- The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to use its standing agenda item on emerging issues and trends to provide input or suggestions to other functional commissions or to the Council in areas where they might require support and guidance on how to introduce a gender perspective into their work. Interaction between the chairpersons of the other functional commissions and the chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women to ensure that a gender perspective is reflected in all sectoral areas should be encouraged.

- In examining how its recommendations regarding gender mainstreaming in poverty eradication are being implemented by the United Nations system and by intergovernmental machinery, the Council may wish to establish a model for the future monitoring of mainstreaming efforts.

- The Council may advise functional commissions to make the maximum use of the work of the Commission on the Status of Women when monitoring the implementation of gender-related recommendations of conferences falling within their own mandate and in accordance with their multi-year work programmes. In particular, the Commission's resolutions and agreed conclusions on the critical areas of concern should be used by other functional commissions when dealing with related matters.

- The Commission on the Status of Women should make the maximum use of the work of other functional commissions. For example, in 1998, when the human rights themes in the Platform for Action are examined, the work of the Commission on Human Rights should be taken into account as a contribution to the work of the Commission on the Status of Women. In 1999, the Commission on the Status of Women should draw upon the work of the Commission on Population and Development when examining the critical area of concern "Women and health".

- The work of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights in the area of women's human rights should be taken into account by other commissions when dealing with rights- or gender-related matters.

- The Council should ensure that in the review and appraisal processes planned for global conferences (human rights in 1998, population and development in 1999, social development and women in 2000 and shelter in 2001), effective use is made of gender analysis to identify differential impacts of policies and programmes on women and men and to indicate future action to achieve greater equality for women.

C. Regional commissions

29. Gender sensitivity is apparent in aspects of the work of governing bodies of regional commissions and in particular in the agreed conclusions on poverty eradication approved by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in 1996. The resolution adopted by the Economic Commission for Africa on strengthening women's contribution to the second United Nations Industrial Development Decade for Africa represents a significant effort in mainstreaming gender. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), at its fifty-second session, in 1997, adopted a plan of action and in-depth reform of its programme and methods of work, and identified the mainstreaming of a gender perspective as a cross-sectoral concern which should permeate all its areas of work. With respect to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the main instrument for mainstreaming is the regional programme of action, which was endorsed by the Commission at its twenty-sixth session, in 1996, as a complement to the medium-term plan for the period 1996-2001. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) at its nineteenth session (May 1997), adopted a Regional Integrated Programme of Action for follow-up to global conferences, with gender mainstreaming occupying a central role.

Recommendations

30. The recommendation relating to the regional commissions is as follows:

- Gender should be taken into account more systematically by the governing bodies of regional commissions and their subsidiary bodies. The regional commissions should act as catalysts for exchanging experiences and best practices among United Nations and non-United Nations organizations active in gender mainstreaming at the regional level. In this regard, the Council may wish to review the capacity of the regional commissions to strengthen gender mainstreaming in their activities and to promote regional cooperation in this respect.

II. MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

31. The present section examines elements that should be consistently in place within the organizations and entities of the United Nations system to ensure that gender considerations become an integral part of all work processes of staff and management. Subsection A examines institutional requirements to ensure that responsibility for mainstreaming moves beyond gender specialists to institutions; subsection B reviews lessons learned in gender mainstreaming; subsection C discusses the need for gender mainstreaming in the integrated follow-up to all United Nations conferences; and subsection D puts forward suggestions to strengthen accountability for mainstreaming.

A. Institutional requirements

1. Mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes and in planning and budgeting

(a) Policies and programmes

32. The Secretary-General has made a commitment to mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes of the United Nations system. The accountability of senior managers in this regard will be pursued vigorously and the four executive committees set up to facilitate concerted and coordinated management of the work of the Organization have been instructed to incorporate a gender perspective.[9]

33. The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women assists the Secretary-General to ensure the system-wide coordination of policy for implementing the Platform for Action and for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all activities of the United Nations system. The Special Adviser chairs the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality of the Administrative Committee on Coordination. She is a member of the Policy Coordination Group chaired by the Secretary-General and a member of the four executive committees. Based on a process of two-way communication and cooperation, the Special Adviser supports and advises the Secretary-General and senior managers in the United Nations system on gender issues within their respective areas of responsibility and promotes the achievement of a gender balance in the secretariats of the system.

34. The commitment of senior management, requiring clarity in regard to the concept of mainstreaming and the capacity to translate it into practice, is an essential ingredient for institutionalizing mainstreaming in policies and programmes, and for ensuring that gender issues are reflected at every stage of the programme process. Mainstreaming, however, continues to be perceived by many as a "special interest issue", identified largely with the recruitment of female staff, rather than as an integrated approach to achieving policy or development goals. In some parts of the United Nations system, lack of clear intergovernmental mandates for gender mainstreaming constrains the secretariat from addressing gender concerns in policies and programme planning.

35. The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality is mandated to prepare for consideration and adoption by the Administrative Committee on Coordination, a mission statement for the United Nations system, reflecting a coordinated position on the advancement and empowerment of women and on gender mainstreaming. The mandates and mission statements of a number of United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have already stated their commitment to achieving gender equality, the empowerment of women and the promotion of equal rights of women and girls and their full participation in all aspects of development.

36. Further steps are required, however, to translate these policy statements from discretionary guidelines into practical tools and performance indicators for use by staff. Mainstreaming practice requires more than designing and implementing "add-on" projects for women. Currently, United Nations development entities that actively address gender issues in their work, in general take a two-pronged approach: (a) mainstreaming gender considerations in priorities, policies and programmes and (b) targeting women as participants and/or beneficiaries through women- and girl-specific programmes. The Secretary-General will encourage members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to issue administrative instructions or take related actions to ensure the consistent implementation of gender-sensitive policies in all departments and organizations of the United Nations system and by all levels of staff in all areas.

37. To date, gender issues have been more effectively addressed at the project level than in policy and programme formulation. The major focus has been the adjustment of project designs to incorporate gender concerns, or to mitigate negative effects after the critical decisions have been made about priorities, resource allocation and types of interventions. Gender analysis should be applied at all levels, including planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation.

38. The perception persists that certain technical areas or projects and abstract processes of policy and programme development are gender-neutral and therefore do not lend themselves to gender mainstreaming. Projects or processes that are "people-oriented" or emphasize a participatory approach and the human dimension are, on the other hand, more likely to be perceived as suitable for a gender approach.

39. Mainstreaming and targeting are not mutually exclusive, but complementary strategies, both having the achievement of gender-sensitive outcomes as their objective. Increasingly, women-specific projects are linked to mainstreaming efforts.

(b) Planning and budgeting

40. Some of the entities of the United Nations system have made progress in visibly mainstreaming a gender perspective into their medium-term plans, programme planning or programme budgets, including, for example, UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNFPA and WFP. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has identified the promotion of gender equality as one of three priority areas for technical cooperation in its programme and budget for the biennium 1998-1999. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) includes the concept of gender mainstreaming in its medium-term plan framework (1998-2001) as a cross-sectoral aspect of its work, and the medium-term strategy (1996-2001) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) includes gender mainstreaming as a transdisciplinary endeavour. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has mainstreamed the consideration of women's issues in the substantive work of the organization as a whole. The principal guiding framework for the development of the tenth general programme of work (2002-2007) of the World Health Organization (WHO) is the renewed health-for-all strategy, which places special emphasis on a gender perspective in health policy development. The Strategy 2000 (1997-2000) of the United Nations Volunteers refers to gender as a key area of concern.

41. A number of entities target women through the addition of women-specific projects to existing programmes. For example, the Division on Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) emphasizes the promotion of women's participation and their entrepreneurship development. ILO is launching a programme on more and better jobs for women to improve the quantity and quality of employment for women.

42. The institutionalization of gender policies and of mainstreaming throughout work programmes and sectoral areas is a pending task in many departments and entities of the United Nations system. ECLAC has developed a project with extrabudgetary funding which aims at integrating gender analysis and planning in its programmes and institutional processes. A series of workshops will demonstrate the relevance of gender in development projects and public policies in general and introduce methods for moving from "women components" in some policies and projects to a mainstreaming approach.

43. In the United Nations system resources are earmarked for women-specific activities, both in normative/policy areas and in operational areas. Operational resources are largely provided for catalytic areas of support, and are modest compared with those for core programme areas. Information about projects that respond to women, in both separate and integrated ways, and about funding directed towards women remains poor,[10] and there is no consistent United Nations system-wide standard for reporting outcomes.

44. At its second session, the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality considered that resources for mainstreaming were essential at all levels, including at the regional/national level. It concluded that the quantification of resources benefiting women and men, respectively, as a result of mainstreaming was essential. Current budget codes in the United Nations system do not allow for an assessment of allocations disaggregated by sex or by beneficiary. The disaggregation of resources is essential to assessing and monitoring whether women benefit from such resources in a way that accelerates the achievement of the goal of gender equality. It is also essential to monitor whether disadvantages women face in specific areas are being remedied. The Committee has decided to elaborate guidelines for budgeting processes and coding of budgets.

Recommendations

45. Recommendations on mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes and in planning and budgeting are as follows:

- All entities of the United Nations system, including departments of the United Nations Secretariat and other entities that have not yet done so, should develop gender mainstreaming policies for their areas of responsibility, based on the system-wide mission statement of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, and report thereon to the Economic and Social Council. Such policies should be developed with the support of gender units/focal points, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat and the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality.

- All entities/secretariats of the United Nations system should review the implications of a gender-sensitive approach for their sector, based on the Beijing Platform for Action, the results of other recent United Nations conferences and summits and their own intergovernmental mandates, and adjust their policies and activities, including developing and implementing targeted, women-specific activities to achieve gender equality, as provided for in the Platform for Action.

- The importance of a gender perspective should be reflected in the vision for the United Nations for the future and the need for gender units/focal points should be supported as part of the institutional structure of the organization to ensure that gender is given adequate consideration as a cross-sectoral concern in all programme priorities.

- United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies should ensure that gender concerns are addressed when setting priorities, allocating resources and identifying types of interventions, not merely as an adjustment to project design after the critical decisions have been taken. They should further develop techniques for analysing target populations in their socio-economic contexts, and promote consultations and a participatory approach to policy and project design. Gender analysis should be included in programming for participatory development and good governance, human rights and conflict-resolution.

- The entities of the United Nations system should institutionalize gender concerns at all levels through steps including:

- The adoption of mainstreaming policies and the formulation of specific mainstreaming strategies for sectoral areas;

- The improvement of tools and mechanisms for mainstreaming, such as the use of data disaggregated by sex and age and of sector-specific gender surveys, studies and guidelines, and checklists for programming;

- The establishment of instruments and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, such as gender impact analysis methodologies;

- The creation of accountability mechanisms, including incentive and reward systems.

- In preparation for the comprehensive review of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001, the extent to which a gender perspective is being applied through institutional directives for planning and programming, rather than as discretionary guidelines, should be assessed.

- The Council may wish to invite all intergovernmental bodies in the United Nations system with responsibility for overseeing planning and programming to monitor how intergovernmental mandates on mainstreaming are reflected in medium-term plans and in programme budgets, and how follow-up to the Platform for Action is reflected in sectoral programmes and budgets. In particular, the Economic and Social Council should encourage the governing bodies of, for example, UNDP, UNFPA, UNCTAD and WFP, to assess how the mainstreaming mandate is being translated into country programmes and projects. Governing bodies should be encouraged to review the outcomes of women-specific projects and of a mainstreaming approach in programming. The Council should invite the governing bodies of the specialized agencies to do likewise.

- All entities of the United Nations system should institute mechanisms to facilitate gender mainstreaming in planning and programming - for example, through intra-departmental coordination or the participation of gender specialists in the planning and programming mechanisms of the organization or department concerned. Senior decision makers should seek the advice of gender specialists on how to mainstream gender into planning and programming.

2. Coordination by the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Development Fund for Women in mainstreaming a gender perspective

46. In the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, the mainstreaming mandate expands the role of the core women-specific entities of the United

Nations system referred to in the Platform for Action, namely, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and other gender units/focal points, to include provision of advice and guidance on how to apply the gender variable. The core entities have sought to share information and develop joint activities, including activities relating to gender mainstreaming. The functions of these entities are referred to in the Platform for Action and subsequent intergovernmental mandates, including their role in mainstreaming a gender perspective in various spheres, such as research, policy formulation, data collection and analysis, information and communication, and operational activities.

Recommendations

47. Recommendations with regard to coordination by the Division for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW and UNIFEM in mainstreaming a gender perspective are as follows:

- In order to strengthen the programmatic complementarities of the Division for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW and UNIFEM, the Council might request that the annual reports of both INSTRAW and UNIFEM be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women so that the Commission may advise the Council on how best to harmonize the implementation of their mandates and avoid overlap.

- The Council may encourage the continued development of joint activities and of work plans in such areas as women's human rights, women and decision-making and, taking into account General Assembly resolution 50/166, violence against women.

3. The role of gender units/focal points in mainstreaming

48. The role of gender units/focal points in mainstreaming is increasingly that of catalysts, advocates and agents of change. Gender specialists emphasize that all activity, whether a technical or sectoral project or a policy in any given field, needs to be analysed, designed and monitored in reference to target populations.

49. Gender experts often serve as the main, if not the only, centre of responsibility for implementing the mainstreaming mandate within a department or sector. This suggests lack of awareness of gender issues and the continuation of a "women-specific" rather than a gender approach to programming and implementation. Clear administrative guidelines or accountability mechanisms would strengthen the responsibility of programme managers and senior officials for mainstreaming, and increase opportunities for gender specialists to engage staff responsible for a particular area or sector in a policy dialogue on gender mainstreaming.

50. Virtually all United Nations entities, including departments of the United Nations Secretariat, have gender units/focal points. The location of such gender experts in the larger organizational structure varies, from being linked to the senior management structure to being located in sectoral areas. The location, seniority, resources and senior management support given to gender experts determines their effectiveness in acting as catalysts for mainstreaming, and the degree to which mainstreaming is reflected in the policy framework of an entity, and in its area and sector programming and implementation.

51. In addition to having gender units/focal points at their headquarters location, United Nations entities with country offices or field operations usually have gender focal points at the country level, or sometimes at the regional level, to provide technical support in capacity-building for gender mainstreaming in policy and programming processes and for monitoring mainstreaming in the formulation and implementation of programmes and projects. In instances where responsibility for gender issues forms part of the larger portfolio of a staff member, or where junior level staff are responsible for gender issues, opportunities for developing appropriate policy approaches and programme strategies are often limited. Inter-agency arrangements are often in place at the country level to coordinate the efforts of focal points concerned with follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and gender mainstreaming. These arrangements, however, are not universal, nor is there much feedback to Headquarters. In countries where UNIFEM regional programme advisers operate, they convene inter-agency task forces or committees on women and gender.

52. Many entities, including the United Nations Secretariat, have designated focal points for the status of women and gender balance in staffing. In some instances, these focal points have also been assigned the responsibility for substantive mainstreaming issues. It is questionable whether these two sets of issues should be the responsibility of the same individual, but gender experts and focal points for the status of women often work together in developing coordinated strategies to bring about organizational change.

Recommendations

53. Recommendations on the role of gender units/focal points in mainstreaming are as follows:

- The Council may wish to emphasize the importance of gender units/focal points in supporting gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes of the United Nations system, and their recognition in an institutional context should be stressed. The location, seniority and resources of gender experts and their direct access to the most senior levels of management and decision-making, and to all policy-making and programming processes, are critical in translating the mainstreaming mandate into practical reality. The terms of reference of gender focal points should be clear, and they should have the active and demonstrable support of senior managers. The role of such gender specialists in all areas, including the political, humanitarian, peace and security areas, should be strengthened.

- The Council may wish to emphasize that the responsibilities of gender specialists should include:

  - Development of gender-sensitive policies and programme strategies for a sector or area;

  - Provision of advice and support to sectoral staff in applying gender considerations in their work;

  - Development of tools and methodologies for mainstreaming;

  - Collection and dissemination of information and of best practices;

  - Monitoring and evaluation of progress in mainstreaming, in both policy and programme terms.

- Coordination and cooperative links between gender specialists and staff working in sectoral areas, both at Headquarters and at the country level, should be established and strengthened. Intra-departmental and interdepartmental working groups, intersectoral collaboration and ongoing information exchange between gender experts and sectoral staff are among the means that could be used for increasing awareness and skills in mainstreaming.

- Gender specialists, particularly at the country level, should continue to place major emphasis on establishing a policy dialogue with sectoral areas, inter alia, with respect to the integrated follow-up to all recent United Nations conferences. Such linkages would facilitate the identification of the complementarity of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action with the results of other recent United Nations conferences, and would ensure the integration at the country level of the follow-up to the Beijing Conference with the follow-up to all other recent United Nations conferences. Gender specialists should collaborate with and seek advice from UNIFEM in that process.

- Gender units/focal points should provide guidance on how gender equality concerns can be made a central concern in conference follow-up at the national level, while at the same time assisting in the identification of women-specific components in programming and in projects, as appropriate. Opportunities for collaboration between gender specialists and organizations of civil society should be further developed and utilized. Gender focal points as well as UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat and INSTRAW should strengthen networking with national machinery for the advancement of women and facilitate linkages between such machinery and the institutions and processes engaged in the implementation of the results of other recent United Nations conferences.

- Coordination and communication between gender specialists at the country level, regional gender specialists, gender advisers and gender units at Headquarters should be strengthened, inter alia through expanded use of electronic means of communication. Existing inter-agency arrangements at the country level on gender issues should be strengthened and used to identify areas of commonality and complementarity between implementation of the Fourth World Conference on Women and other conferences, and for gender mainstreaming.

4. Capacity-building for mainstreaming

54. The specialized expertise of gender units/focal points must be supported by the development of gender awareness and basic gender competencies in all staff, and the commitment to applying gender concepts at all stages of work processes. Such competence is critical to providing all intergovernmental bodies with reports that reflect a gender perspective and to facilitating gender-conscious decision-making by intergovernmental machinery in all areas. The provision of necessary training is therefore essential.

55. Awareness of regional and global mandates on gender equality and on mainstreaming a gender perspective, as contained primarily in the Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the regional plans and platforms for action adopted in 1994, prior to the Fourth World Conference on Women, is a prerequisite for staff. All staff should be aware of an organization's policy with regard to gender mainstreaming and be familiar with the use of data and information disaggregated by sex and of checklists or similar tools.

56. The most widely used mechanism for capacity-building is gender training. Training should form part of a broader strategy, including incentive and accountability measures, clear guidelines and responsibilities, and follow-up to training, especially on-the-job application of acquired skills. Gender awareness, training in gender analysis and application of tools, technical support to gender-sensitive programme design, monitoring and evaluation are among the components of a gender mainstreaming strategy.

57. Many entities have a substantial record in providing gender training to their gender experts, staff and national counterparts. They include UNIDO, ESCWA, ESCAP, WFP, UNHCR, INSTRAW and UNIFEM. The Women's Equality and Empowerment Framework of UNICEF promotes women's empowerment as an intrinsic part of the development process. It has two components: (a) training of UNICEF staff and counterparts on gender concepts and the application of the Framework and (b) setting up of global and regional gender networks of experts/resource persons for supporting country programme preparation. The training for gender mainstreaming carried out by UNDP embraces organizational change as a key component of gender mainstreaming. UNFPA is in the process of training all its staff at headquarters, regional and country levels in gender mainstreaming and gender analysis of programmes and subprogrammes. FAO, ILO and UNDP have developed a socio-economic and gender analysis (SEAGA) programme which seeks to locate gender within the broader context of social and economic relations and processes. SEAGA uses a systems theory approach and one of its central

principles is an understanding of the connections between gender and other social variables.

58. Manuals for gender training have been or are being developed by a number of entities. Methodologies for gender training are also being developed by United Nations entities, sometimes collaboratively.

59. A comprehensive assessment of whether gender training is implemented systematically by the United Nations system has not been conducted. Measuring the impact of gender training on programme performance is constrained by lack of appropriate indicators, including those relating to programme responses. There is only limited evaluation of the impact of gender training with regard to programme output and no systematic exchange of training materials or methodologies. Systematic exchange of training manuals and methodologies, and of evaluation and impact assessments, allows other parts of the system to benefit from existing initiatives.

60. National capacity-building in gender analysis, gender planning and gender mainstreaming skills is essential for mainstreaming a gender perspective in development cooperation, and in the integrated follow-up to recent United Nations conferences. While national machinery for the advancement of women, and welfare and social services usually receive priority, other sectoral ministries such as finance, planning, agriculture, health, energy and so forth also require awareness and basic skills so that gender issues are incorporated within the scope of country and region-wide development initiatives. Joint training of United Nations staff with government and non-governmental organization counterparts has been beneficial in programme follow-up, in building networks and in expanding training across sectors.

Recommendations

61. Recommendations on capacity-building for mainstreaming are as follows:

- The United Nations system should ensure that specialized gender expertise is available to all entities and in all areas, and should increase opportunities for gender specialists to improve their skills and receive ongoing training.

- All staff should be required to have basic gender competence and should assume responsibility for mainstreaming in their assignments. An inventory of strategies and efforts currently in place to increase gender awareness and strengthen skills for gender planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation should be prepared. Successful practices should be identified and widely shared throughout the United Nations system, particularly among senior managers and decision makers. The impact of a multi-pronged approach to strengthening gender competence, using gender training and other approaches to motivating staff, should be evaluated and used as a basis for further efforts in human resource development.

- A system-wide evaluation of the impact of gender training, including training related to programme performance, provided to United Nations gender specialists, staff and governmental counterparts should be prepared, and successful practices should be identified.

- A database of all United Nations system activities and materials related to increasing gender competence and capacity for gender mainstreaming should be created and maintained, including of gender training materials and manuals.

- Resources for capacity-building in gender mainstreaming should be identified, particularly from extrabudgetary resources.

5. Information base for mainstreaming

62. Progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes requires the availability of and access to information about gender concepts and their relevance for a sector or an issue, as well as data and information to incorporate gender considerations in research and analysis, policy and programme development, decision-making, and monitoring and evaluation.[11]

63. Led by the United Nations Statistics Division, the United Nations system collaborates closely in developing and compiling social indicators on a wide range of subjects, including those related to gender.[12] A minimum national social data set was endorsed by the Statistical Commission to monitor follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits with the help of statistics and indicators. Assistance is provided to countries and regional organizations in the preparation and production of publications concerning gender statistics and indicators.

64. The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality will assess efforts undertaken by the United Nations system and by the Administrative Committee on Coordination in developing statistics and indicators and qualitative data for monitoring follow-up to recent United Nations conferences and summits. It will evaluate these efforts with regard to gender dimensions and gender programming, and prepare recommendations for harmonization and elimination of duplication. The Inter-Agency Committee will also assess efforts to develop qualitative data and indicators.

65. The Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, INSTRAW and UNIFEM have launched an Internet site, WomenWatch, to serve as a dedicated gateway to information on global women's issues available in the United Nations system. It also links various databases that are disaggregated by sex.

Recommendations

66. Recommendations on information in support of mainstreaming are as follows:

- The United Nations Statistics Division, in collaboration with the United Nations system, should further develop the Wistat database to cover a wider range of indicators and related statistics on various aspects of social and economic development and to make the outputs of Wistat more accessible to users. Statistics and indicators on unremunerated work, time use and poverty, and on reproductive health and access to health services should be improved. The development of guidelines for the use of statistics to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women should continue.

- The appropriate United Nations bodies and entities should make efforts to develop qualitative indicators to monitor the implementation of the gender-related recommendations of recent United Nations conferences. Attention should also be given to the development of benchmarks in the implementation of international human rights instruments as they pertain to women.

- The use of electronic networks for the exchange of information on women's issues and gender mainstreaming should be expanded as an important component of overall communication strategies and should become a regular component of project development.

- United Nations agencies, funds and programmes should be urged to support WomenWatch, the United Nations Internet gateway on women's issues, and to participate in its development.

6. Gender balance

67. A critical mass of women in decision-making is believed to contribute to changes in organizational culture. Such changes often create a more conducive environment for mainstreaming, but the number of female staff and managers per se is not an indicator of the degree to which a gender perspective is being mainstreamed into policies and programmes.

68. Although the achievement of gender balance has been a concern of the General Assembly and other intergovernmental bodies for some time, no intergovernmental body at present receives comprehensive statistical information regarding the number and percentage of women at all levels in the organizations and entities of the United Nations system.

69. United Nations agencies have made efforts to demonstrate their commitment to promoting the advancement of women through their own staffing policies. Initiatives include the United Nations strategic plan of action for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (1995-2000), approved by the General Assembly in 1994 (see resolution 49/167), and an administrative instruction on special measures for the achievement of gender equality (ST/AI/412). Projections under the strategic plan are being recalculated and the special measures are being streamlined and updated.

70. Policies on harassment, including sexual harassment, are being developed, and work, family and life issues are being addressed to encourage women's and men's equal participation in the organizations of the system. Tools and methodologies for promoting attitudinal changes in the workplace, inter alia, through specific measures of accountability and responsibility, are necessary. A comprehensive questionnaire on harassment, including sexual harassment, is being circulated to staff of the United Nations, UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA in order to have a more informed view of the situation and to amend policies accordingly.

Recommendations

71. Recommendations on gender balance are as follows:

- The Council may recommend that the preparation and presentation to the General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women of statistical information regarding the number and percentage of women at all levels system-wide be revived in order to facilitate a comprehensive approach to intergovernmental monitoring of changes and progress.

- The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the International Civil Service Commission should monitor progress in implementing staffing policies aimed at achieving gender balance and should identify obstacles in that regard. They should also monitor the development and implementation of measures aimed at creating a gender-sensitive work environment and the impact of those measures on women.

B. Experience and lessons learned in gender mainstreaming

72. Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, several operational entities have undertaken assessments and analysed lessons learned in integrating women's issues into their activities and in gender mainstreaming.

73. UNDP conducted an extensive review of gender mainstreaming in 20 of its programme countries and convened a consultation on gender mainstreaming in February 1997 with the participation of several agencies. It was found that most country offices had not truly evolved gender planning systems and that the bulk of the work was focused on women in development (WID). The implications for future progress were summarized in a guidance note on gender planning for UNDP offices.

74. UNFPA is assessing the extent to which gender considerations are being effectively mainstreamed into all aspects of its reproductive health, population and development work, and into its advocacy policies, strategies and programmes at the global, regional and country levels. Policy guidelines are being revised to ensure appropriate integration of gender issues, and a conceptual framework on gender mainstreaming and quantitative and qualitative indicators has been formulated. Missions are being undertaken in 12 countries to determine the degree to which gender mainstreaming is being effectively implemented in UNFPA-supported country programmes and projects.

75. UNICEF has undertaken periodic desk reviews of its capacity-building programme for mainstreaming gender issues in its country programmes. Currently, it is analysing the experience of 50 countries, taking into account actions taken to develop modules/materials based on special needs and identifying best practices in the translation of training into country-level actions.

76. The social and gender planning capacity of WFP in emergency operations was reviewed during 1995 in 15 countries and specific case studies were developed. Results indicate that the institutional and operational framework will need to be reconsidered to make it more gender sensitive, and this requires the improvement of the operational policy development of WFP, as well as its emergency operations practices. The WFP Memoranda of Understanding with partners on the joint and individual responsibilities of each agency define implementation and monitoring requirements, including participatory modes of planning which take into consideration the specific needs and potentials of refugee and displaced women; the provision of appropriate and adequate food; women and children at risk; and positions held by women in managing food aid.

77. The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality will convene a joint workshop with the Expert Group on WID of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development to review experiences in mainstreaming. In preparation for the workshop, efforts will be made to collate best practices and lessons learned.

78. The review of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women to be carried out in 1998 by the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council will provide an opportunity to assess achievements and obstacles with regard to all activities, including those at the field level, in the implementation of the Platform for Action and of mainstreaming a gender perspective.

Recommendations

79. Recommendations with regard to experience and lessons learned are as follows:

- Experiences in mainstreaming, including successful strategies and best practices, should be further collected and shared. Particular efforts should be made to collect and document mainstreaming experiences in areas where gender issues have traditionally been less visible, such as the areas of peace, security and peacekeeping, macroeconomic policies and political affairs. The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality should develop a standardized format for documenting and assessing mainstreaming experiences.

- Pilot projects should be conducted by different entities with different mandates, including projects in normative areas, policy development and operational activities, to assess the impact of mainstreaming on programme output. "Women-specific" or WID projects should be differentiated from gender mainstreaming.

- United Nations entities providing technical assistance should intensify integrated social and economic analysis, since such an integrated approach is more conducive to introducing a gender perspective into project design and implementation.

- Based on lessons learned, all operational entities and those with field operations should develop and adopt procedures and incentives, including checklists, for strengthening mainstreaming in programme development and project implementation. Inter-agency committees at the country level should be involved in this process so as to ensure that there is no duplication of effort, and that there is consistency in approach. The existing experiences of some entities, including the use of memoranda of understanding on gender equality goals, should be shared widely with a view to developing model agreements.

C. Integrated follow-up to global United Nations conferences

80. The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality has emphasized that the inter-agency task forces on follow-up to major United Nations conferences need to fully integrate a gender perspective in their work, including the case studies conducted by some of them at the country level and activities related to the integrated follow-up to global conferences. The Committee offered its support and identified a number of steps which could facilitate gender factors being taken into consideration by the task forces.

81. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and mainstreaming a gender perspective are expected to be an integral part of all conference follow-up activities of the United Nations system, especially at the country level. The involvement of national machinery for the advancement of women, women's groups and non-governmental organizations in those larger development efforts is essential.

82. The report of the Secretary-General prepared in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/36 contains information on the activities of the three inter-agency task forces established to support country-level follow-up to recent United Nations conferences and summits, and on the activities of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality and the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (E/1997/73). The report also contains information on follow-up to the Platform for Action and the mainstreaming of a gender perspective and provides a regional perspective on follow-up.

83. The United Nations regional commissions have also taken steps to facilitate inter-agency cooperation in the follow-up to recent United Nations conferences. ESCAP is developing quantitative and qualitative indicators for overall monitoring of regional implementation of those conferences. ESCWA has established an inter-agency coordination group for integrated conference follow-up. The regional programme of action of ECLAC, as reflected in its programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 and its medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, has the potential for integrated follow-up to all United Nations conferences, but its implementation has been hampered by limited allocation of human and financial resources. In ECA, gender is identified as a

cross-cutting issue in the new strategic direction of the Commission. ECE has prepared a synopsis of activities undertaken by organizations involved in regional follow-up in each of the critical areas of concern covered by the Platform for Action.

Recommendations

84. Recommendations on integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences are as follows:

- The role of the resident coordinators in developing a coherent approach to gender mainstreaming in integrated conference follow-up at the country level and in highlighting gender issues with governmental counterparts and the donor community should be strengthened. Gender should be taken into account by all thematic groups, and in the preparation of common programme and programme-resource frameworks at the country level and in the development of common databases in each programme country. UNIFEM regional programme advisers should play a leading role in ensuring that mainstreaming the gender dimension becomes an integral part in these processes. Their work should be closely coordinated with UNDP gender focal points in their role of advising and supporting UNDP resident representatives.

- The UNIFEM regional programme advisers and the UNDP gender focal points in country offices should strengthen their networking with national machinery for the advancement of women and women's non-governmental organizations to facilitate their active participation in overall country programming for sustainable development, particularly in areas other than those specifically addressed to women. The Division for the Advancement of Women and INSTRAW should interact with national machineries as well. These entities should also increase interaction with the regional commissions in coordination of integrated follow-up.

D. Accountability for mainstreaming through the use of performance indicators, evaluation of progress in mainstreaming and impact analysis

85. There is a gap between the endorsement of gender equality policies and their translation into practical reality in programme development, programme output and operational activities. Accountability and responsibility for gender mainstreaming in all areas of policy and programme development and operational activities are imperative for institutionalizing a gender mainstreaming approach. Accountability for gender mainstreaming encompasses both the intergovernmental and the institutional level.

86. Intergovernmental bodies have an ongoing responsibility to monitor action taken in accordance with their mandates. The agenda of the Commission on the Status of Women provides for an annual review of mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system. The Economic and Social Council is expected to devote, before the year 2000, one operational activities segment and one high-

level segment to questions related to the advancement of women, and follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. The General Assembly receives an annual report on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and mainstreaming a gender perspective.

87. Accountability needs to be shifted from gender units/focal points to institutions. The input approach currently in place, characterized by policies, guidelines, training, and designated staff responsible for gender issues, must be supplemented with an outcome approach.

88. The study entitled "Technical assistance and women: from mainstreaming towards institutional accountability" (see E/CN.6/1995/6) and a discussion paper submitted by the Gender in Development (GID) Subgroup of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy to the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality at its second session, presented recommendations to increase accountability for gender mainstreaming by development cooperation agencies. Both the study and the discussion paper emphasized internal agency accountability, and institutional mechanisms and management culture as key entry points for establishing accountability structures. Both stressed the importance of accountability for outcomes and for establishing mainstreaming as an institution-wide responsibility, rather than as a responsibility of gender experts.

Recommendations

89. The following recommendation relates to accountability:

- The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality should prepare a catalogue of accountability measures, including performance indicators, to monitor and evaluate progress in mainstreaming. Such measures should cover the programmatic side, including programme output, the staff performance and capacity side, and the resource side. A number of core indicators should be identified, which should be used in all departments and entities and on the basis of which a baseline on gender mainstreaming should be established. Performance should be monitored on a regular basis and should be reported to intergovernmental bodies, including the Commission on the Status of Women.

Notes

[1] Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 7 (E/1997/27), chap. I, sect. C.2, resolution 41/6.

[2] See the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/51/322), paras. 7-15.

[3] For the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, see document A/51/180.

[4] For examples of such action, see the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/51/322).

[5] Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 5 (E/1997/25), chap. I, sect. A.

[6] Ibid., chap. I, sect. C.

[7] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (A/CONF.177/20 and Add.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[8] Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1989, Supplement No. 3 (E/1989/21), para. 139.

[9] See the letter dated 17 March 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/51/829), sect. A.

[10] See the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Technical assistance and women: from mainstreaming towards institutional accountability" (E/CN.6/1995/6).

[11] See Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women ..., chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, chap. IV, strategic objective H.3.

[12] See, for example, The World's Women, 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.90.XVII.3), The World's Women, 1995: Trends and Statistics (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XVII.2) and Wistat: Women's Indicators and Statistics Database, Version 3, CD-ROM (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XVII.6).